

SEFIRA (Socio-economic implications for individual responses to air pollution policies in the EU +27) is a FP7 coordination action that brings together some of the best scientific and socio-economic resources at the interface between environmental, economic and social sciences in order to increase the effectiveness and acceptability of air quality policies and legislation. SEFIRA's core objective is to increase the understanding of individual dimensions of policy effectiveness, a task that will be carried out by analyzing individual choices and behaviour in a socio-economic context ranging from the local to the European level.



*Image: SEFIRA Consortium participants at the Kick Off Meeting – Urbino June 2013. Photo courtesy of Paolo Giardullo*

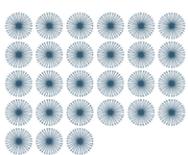
SEFIRA will bring together experts in the fields of atmospheric sciences, environmental and legal sociology, anthropology, geography and economics. The Department of Economy, Society and Politics (DESP) of the University of Urbino “Carlo Bo”, Italy is the coordinator of the Consortium.

The other SEFIRA partners are:

- International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), Austria
- K.U. Leuven Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Belgium
- Institute of Social Economy of the Warsaw School of Economics – IGS), Poland
- Department of Human Geography at Lund University, Sweden
- Environmental Research Group (ERG) at King's College London, United Kingdom
- National Research Council -Institute of Atmospheric Sciences and Climate (CNR-ISAC), Italy
- Pragma srl, Italy

Detailed information about each of the partners can be found on the website:

<http://www.sefira-project.eu/>



## Call for associated partners



Institutions or individual experts that are willing to cooperate with SEFIRA have the possibility to become SEFIRA Associated Partners. The call is now open and can be found here:

<http://www.sefira-project.eu/ad/deliverables-2/call-for/>

## The revision of the EU Thematic Strategy on Air Quality

The long-term objective of the EU's air quality policy is "to achieve levels of air quality that do not result in unacceptable impacts on, and risks to, human health and the environment. Despite past successes in drastically reducing some air pollutants, such as sulphur dioxide, however, the EU still has some way to go in achieving this goal. Studies suggest that as recently as 2010, more than 400.000 people across the EU died prematurely from exposure to particulate matter and ozone, making air pollution the single most important environmental cause of premature death in the EU.

To underline the need to continue working towards improved air quality, the Commission in 2011 asked for a thorough review of existing air quality policy to assess its effectiveness and propose new measures and targets. The results of this review were announced on 18 December 2013, when the Commission adopted a new "Clean Air Programme for Europe" and proposed a revised national emissions ceiling directive and a new directive on establishing emission limits for medium combustion plants. In this way the programme aims to avoid 58.000 premature deaths by 2030, help safeguard ecosystems from nitrogen pollution and protect forests from acidification.



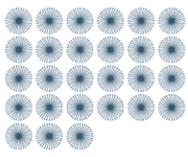
*Image: Air Pollution in Paris 2012.*

The Commission estimates that the health benefits of these measures will "save society €40-140 billion in external costs and provide about €3 billion in direct benefits due to higher productivity of the workforce, lower healthcare costs, higher crop yields and less damage to buildings". Increased productivity is expected to "add the equivalent of around 100 000 additional jobs", thus creating a positive effect for Europe's economy.

More information on the new Clean Air Policy Package is available [here](#):

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean\\_air\\_policy.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm)

[www.sefira-project.eu](http://www.sefira-project.eu)



## What is next?

One of SEFIRA's aims is to analyze the public acceptability of air quality policies, focusing especially on socio-economic issues. These socio-economic aspects are being analysed in 4 European metropolitan areas (Milan in Italy, Warsaw in Poland, Malmö in Sweden and Ghent in Belgium), where special attention is paid to the study of social perceptions.

In order to expand the impact of SEFIRA on social networks, including starting a dialogue with stakeholders at all levels, the Universities of Urbino and Lund are together engaged in guaranteeing the appropriate communication dimension of the SEFIRA Project.

The individual acceptability of air quality policies will be analysed through a pilot stated preference survey in 5 different European countries using the CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews) method. Socio-economic differences and the impacts of individuals' attitudinal and perceptual responses toward policy acceptability will be explored via discrete choice modeling, thus contributing to the European Commission's revision process of EU air policies.



Image: Air Pollution in Warsaw 2013.

## Links and resources

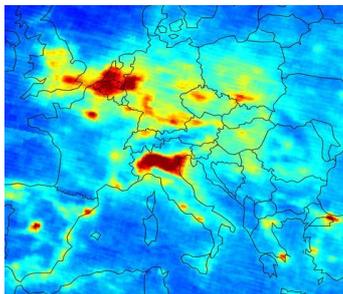
More information about the ongoing air policy review is available [here](#):

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean\\_air\\_policy.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm)

Other resources on air quality in the EU, and on recent and ongoing related research can be found here:

- <http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps>
- <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-quality-in-europe-2013>
- <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-implementation-pilot-2013>

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